



**Aids and Equipment  
Action Alliance** Inc  
Making participation and inclusion a reality  
ABN 1 32 630 351 403

**Submission** addressing the

“Review of the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport “based on “The Equipping Inclusion Studies” commissioned by the Aids and Equipment Action Alliance

**The AEAA committee** comprises 4 health professionals and 4 members of the disability sector who donate their time and expertise to identify areas of concern , for people managing their lives around their disability. The AEAA aims is to provide an independent voice for those people with a disability, living in the community , whose lives can be enhanced with use of assistive technology. The work of the AEAA is to identify ways in which assistive technology can be made more accessible in a more affordable and inclusive manner with the aim of assisting greater participation in the community."

### **The right to accessible public transport**

The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006), ratified by Australia, directs signatories to,

**‘take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas’ (Article 9 Accessibility)**

### **Evidence from Victorians with disabilities**

In 2010, the experiences of 100 Victorians living with disabilities were researched in The Equipping Inclusion Studies. These Studies concluded that, as well as assistive technologies and personal support, the broader environment, including continuous paths of travel within the community and accessible public transport networks, is an essential ingredient for full participation beyond the home (p57).

The Studies concluded that a range of duty holders are responsible for the participation experiences of people living with disability, including Departments of Infrastructure and Transport.

Specific barriers to participation were identified as: distance between facilities; visual and tactile surfacing of roads and paths; accessible paths of travel; kerb cuts; signage; and welcoming buildings with operable doors and lifts, accessible counters, and educated and friendly staff (p75)

Data analysis demonstrated that 25% of the 100 participants had unmet needs for accessible public transport.

**The following quotes from people, living with disabilities, illustrate these points:**

- 1.** I stayed in Seattle where it is more physically accessible. I realised I felt different and the difference was that I felt more like I used to feel before my accident when I lived in an environment that was built to include rather than exclude me.
- 2.** [I need] accessible low floor regular public transport that will take me to where I need to go rather than having to take 3 forms of public transport on a crappy Sunday timetable [in order to] attend Mass regularly where my friends go.(p63)
- 3.** I need] low floor public transport; sufficient seating on public transport [in order to] go out and do things with people or on my own and feel like I'm part of something, part of the community, part of life.
- 4.** As I mainly use public transport I spend time planning on internet the route and means of transport (timetables) and how they connect. Often 1 Bus and 2 trains or 2 buses and 1 train to get somewhere; can be limited by access and the time of day/night travelling.

## **Recommendation 1**

: That the basic travel expectations and requirements that, society as a whole enjoys, are provided to all members of society. Unfortunately this is not happening in a timely manner as the case studies, above, indicate. The disability sector is a poor relation when the unmet travel needs, are not addressed and provided, in a timely manner as indicated in the Research article “Equipping Inclusion Study” commissioned by the Aids and Equipment Action Alliance. The unmet needs of accessible public transport , people with a disability ,has been established by research over a long period of time. Accessible public transport is of equal priority for people with a disability, as is the provision of Aids and Equipment mobility aids.

## **Recommendation 2**

: That the disability sector and government join together , on an equal knowledge basis and combine their past experiences and future direction , so that the travel needs of people with a disability are met in a time frame acceptable to the disability sector and the government of the day.

## **Bibliography**

### **The Equipping Inclusion Studies**

(ref: Layton, N., Wilson, E., Colgan, S., Moodie, M. & Carter, R. (2010)  
The Equipping Inclusion Studies: Assistive Technology Use and Outcomes  
in Victoria.  
Melbourne, Deakin University)

**Margaret Stevens Executive Board Member**

**On behalf of ; Aids & Equipment Action Alliance**

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